

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
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R 211547Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2310
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSUL OPORTO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA
USMISSION NATO
DIA WASHDC
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 LISBON 5649

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3
TAGS: PGOV PINT EAGR PO
SUBJECT: FREITAS DO AMARAL SEES A SHIFT TO THE RIGHT

REF: LISBON 5603 (DTG 201737Z JUL 77)

SUMMARY: CDS LEADER FREITAS DO AMARAL TOLD THE AMBASSADOR
JULY 20 THAT THE ENTIRE POLITICAL SPECTRUM HAD MOVED TO THE
RIGHT. HE ARGUED THAT THE THEORY OF THE SOCIALISTS AS THE
BALANCE WHEEL WAS OUTDATED, AND THAT THE PS SHOULD JOIN WITH
THE PSD AND CDS IN A DEMOCRATIC CONVERGENCE. THE PSD AND CDS
HAVE DECIDED TO FORCE THE PS TO ACKNOWLEDGE ITS STATUS AS A
MINORITY GOVERNMENT. IF STRENGTHENED
MECHANISMS FOR DIALOGUE AND INTER-PARTY COOPERATION
RESULT, SO MUCH THE BETTER. BUT IF NOT THE SPECTRE
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OF THE FIRST REPUBLIC COULD RE-EMERGE. END SUMMARY.

1. CDS VIEWS ON POLITICAL SYSTEM: DURING A JULY 20
LUNCH WITH THE AMBASSADOR CDS PRESIDENT FREITAS DO
AMARAL, VICE PRESIDENT AMARO DA COSTA, AND SECRETARY-
GENERAL BASILIO HORTA COMMENTED ON THE CHANGING
POLITICAL SPECTRUM (THEIR VIEWS ON THE SHORT-TERM

POLITICAL OUTLOOK WERE REPORTED REFTEL). AMARAL'S POINT OF DEPARTURE WAS THAT PORTUGAL'S POLITICAL SYSTEM WAS NOT BEING POLARIZED; TO THE CONTRARY, THE ENTIRE POLITICAL SPECTRUM HAD SHIFTED MARKEDLY TO THE RIGHT. HE BELIEVED THE THEORY THAT THE SOCIALISTS HAD TO MAINTAIN THEIR LEFTIST CREDENTIALS IN ORDER TO SERVE AS A POLITICAL BALANCE WAS OUTDATED.

-- CONSEQUENCES FOR THE PS: THE SOCIALISTS ARE IMPLEMENTING ORTHODOX ECONOMIC POLICIES AND A CONSERVATIVE APPROACH TO AGRARIAN REFORM. THE TURNABOUT IN PUBLIC SENTIMENT, EVEN IN THE ALENTEJO DISTRICT OF BEJA, IS NOTABLE. BECAUSE OF THEIR CONSERVATIVE ECONOMIC POLICIES, THE SOCIALISTS CAN NO LONGER PLAY THE ROLE OF PRIVILEGED INTERLOCUTOR WITH THE COMMUNISTS AND LEFT-WING SOCIALISTS. INTERNALLY, THE PS HAS CONFINED ITS LEFT-WING LOSSES TO LOPES CARDOSO AND A FEW OTHERS. THE STRONG SUPPORT OF PS WORKER DEPUTIES FOR AGRARIAN REFORM AND ACCOMPANYING DENUNCIATIONS OF THE COMMUNISTS REFLECTS THE GROWING SPLIT BETWEEN MOST SOCIALISTS AND THE COMMUNISTS.

-- FOR PS LEFT-WINGERS: LOPES CARDOSO AND HIS WORKERS BROTHERHOOD, EXCLUDED FROM THE PS, MIGHT FORM A SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY INCLUDING MELO ANTUNES AND SOME INDEPENDENT LEFTISTS. WITH THE PS DISPLACEMENT TO THE RIGHT, THERE IS ROOM ON THE LEFT BETWEEN THE SOCIALISTS AND THE COMMUNISTS, BUT THE BASE OF SUPPORT IS LIMITED FOR SUCH A GROUP. THE CDS WOULD WELCOME
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SUCH A "EUROCOMMUNIST" HYBRID SINCE IT WOULD LIMIT THE PCP'S CHANCE FOR GROWTH.

-- FOR THE PCP: THE COMMUNISTS ARE NO LONGER WILLING TO BACK THE GOVERNMENT; THE SOCIALISTS HAVE UNDERCUT THE PCP ON ALL ITS MAJOR POLICY GOALS. THE PCP HAS SUFFERED REVERSES ON WORKER CONTROL AND DENATIONALIZATION AND FACES ANOTHER SETBACK ON AGRARIAN REFORM. CUNHAL, IN PRIVATE, IS TALKING OF A FOUR-PARTY GOVERNMENT RANGING FROM CDS TO COMMUNISTS. THE CDS WOULD NEVER JOIN SUCH A GOVERNMENT. THE COMMUNISTS COULD REVERT TO A EUROCOMMUNIST STRATEGY, BUT THEY WILL NOT CONVINCE ANYONE AS LONG AS CUNHAL AND THE OLD-LINE LEADERSHIP REMAIN.

-- FOR THE UNIONS: THE SUCCESS OF THE COMMUNIST-DOMINATED CGTP IN RECENT UNION ELECTIONS DOES NOT REFLECT SUPPORT FOR THE PCP AMONG THE WORKERS. THE WORKERS WHO CHOSE THE

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 LISBON 5649

CGTP FALL ALL ALONG THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM. THEY
WANT A STRONG UNION. KALIDAS BARRETO AND OTHER
SOCIALISTS IN THE CGTP ARE BEING SMART IN
JOINING THE CGTP LEADERSHIP. A PARALLEL CONFEDERATION
HAS NO CHANCE. DEMOCRATIC TRADE UNIONS SHOULD WORK FROM
WITHIN THE CGTP. SOCIALIST COOPERATION TO ITS RIGHT
WOULD NOT AFFECT ITS EXISTING LABOR BASE.
-- FOR THE CDS: THE CDS WOULD REFUSE TO JOIN A
MINORITY PSD/CDS GOVERNMENT. IF NEW ELECTIONS HAVE THE
PSD CDS A PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY, SUCH A COALITION
GOVERNMENT WOULD BE VIABLE PROVIDING THE SOCIALISTS
LIVED UP TO THEIR COMMITMENT TO BE A "CIVILIZED"
OPPOSITON PARTY. THE CDS IS YOUNG, HOWEVER, AND IN NO
HURRY TO GET INTO POWER.
-- FOR THE PSD: THE PSD, PERHAPS BECAUSE IT HAS NO WELL
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DEFINED SPOT IN THE IDEOLOGICAL SPECTRUM HAS DIFFERENT
SHORT-RANGE GOALS THEN THE CDS. THEY ARE "IN A HURRY"
TO GET INTO POWER. THE PSD IS DIVIDED BETWEEN HARDLINERS
AND THOSE WHO WOULD STILL WORK WITH THE SOCIALISTS.
-- FOR MIRN: MIRN, OR THE UNDEMOCRATIC RIGHT, HAS
NUISANCE VALUE BUT STILL DOESN'T REPRESENT A REAL THREAT.

2. DEMOCRATIC CONVERGENCE THE BEST ALTERNATIVE: GIVEN THE DIMINISHING THREAT ON THE LEFT AND THE NEED FOR THE THREE DEMOCRATIC PARTIES TO WORK TOGETHER, A PS/PSD/CDS CONVERGENCE IS THE BEST POLITICAL OPTION. THE THREE PARTIES WORKING TOGETHER WOULD IMMEDIATELY CONSOLIDATE A BROAD BASE OF SUPPORT IN THE CENTER. THE FAR RIGHT WOULD BE WEAKENED AT FIRST. IT MIGHT RECOVER, BUT WOULD NEVER SURPASS THE MINORITY STRENGTH OF THE COMMUNISTS. IF MARIO SOARES MOVED QUICKLY AND WISELY, HE WOULD BE THE LEADING FORCE IN THE DEMOCRATIC CONVERGENCE.

3. COMMENT: FREITAS DO AMARAL WAS IMPRESSIVE AS USUAL IN HIS BREADTH OF VISION, IN HIS ANALYTICAL CAPABILITY, AND IN HIS COMMITMENT TO THE NATIONAL INTEREST. THERE WAS NO DOUBT THAT HIS POSITION TOWARD THE SOCIALISTS HAS HARDENED, ALBEIT FOR TACTICAL REASONS. HE STILL PROFESSED FRIENDSHIP AND ADMIRATION FOR SOARES (HE POINTEDLY OMITTED ANY REFERENCES IN THE CONVERSATION TO SA CARNEIRO), BUT SAID HE COULD NOT CONTINUE TO "VOTE BLINDLY ON THE BASIS OF LAST-MINUTE SOARES APPEALS FOR PATRIOTISM." HE IS, AFTER ALL, THE LEADER OF AN OPPOSITION PARTY AND HE HAS TO SHOW HIS SUPPORTERS THAT HIS PARTY IS BENEFITTING BY HIS POLICIES. SO FAR THE SOCIALISTS HAVE LEFT HIM EMPTY HANDED.

4. FREITAS DO AMARAL, OF COURSE, STANDS TO GAIN
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ENORMOUSLY IF HE CAN PULL THE ENTIRE POLITICAL SPECTRUM TOWARD HIS CORNER. THUS, WHILE MUCH OF WHAT HE SAYS ABOUT THE MOVE TO THE RIGHT IS TRUE, THERE IS AN ELEMENT IN IT OF THE WISH BECOMING THE FACT. HE IS ESSENTIALLY SAYING THE SOCIALISTS ARE NO LONGER THE CENTER--THE PSD IS--AND IF THE SOCIALISTS WANT TO GET BACK INTO THE CENTER THEY MUST MOVE FASTER THAN THEY ARE ALREADY MOVING TO THE RIGHT. HE THINKS THE SOCIALISTS ARE EXAGGERATING WHEN THEY SAY THIS WILL MAKE THEM VULNERABLE IN THE LABOR AREA AND ON THEIR LEFT FLANK IN GENERAL, PARTICULARLY SINCE THE BREAK WITH THE PCP IS NOW DEFINITE AND IRREVERSIBLE. BUT THIS ANALYSIS OVERLOOKS THE FACT THAT THE SOCIALISTS ARE A MUCH MORE HETEROGENEOUS PARTY THAN THE PSD AND CDS, AND THAT A PRECIPITOUS MOVE TO THE RIGHT COULD LEAD TO A MAJOR PS SPLIT, PARTICULARLY SINCE SOARES CAMPAIGNED ON A PLATFORM OF NO ALLIANCES EITHER TO LEFT OR RIGHT. MOREOVER, AMARAL'S STATEMENT THAT THE SOCIALISTS COULD MOVE RIGHT WITHOUT HURTING THEIR WORKER BASE IS FLAWED; VOTERS AND WORKERS CHOSE THE SOCIALISTS IN FOUR ELECTIONS, LARGELY BECAUSE OF THEIR PROGRESSIVE IMAGE.

5. THE MORE IMPORTANT MESSAGE THAT FREITAS DO AMARAL IS
COMMUNICATING IS THAT THE SOCIALISTS ARE A MINORITY
GOVERNMENT AND SHOULD ACT AS SUCH; THE CDS AND PSD HAVE DECIDED
THEY HAVE TO RAM THAT MESSAGE HOME TO THEM. IF STRENGTHENED
MECHANISMS FOR DIALOGUE AND INTER-PARTY COOPERATION RESULT SO
MUCH THE BETTER. BUT IF NOT THE SPECTRE OF THE FIRST
REPUBLIC COULD RE-EMERGE.
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